



rewrite

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Book 4: A Block and a Hard Place (Part I)

The WitherStorm is still alive. Even after all the pain, loss, and sorrow brought onto the team, even after going through danger after danger just to save the world from enteral doom.. the WitherStorm is alive and stronger than ever.

Secrets have been kept, closet friends and allies have been lost, and now.. the fate of the world is lingering. Time is running out. Our friends would have to work together, heal broken wounds, reveal unknown secrets.. but would it be enough to save the world? Will we ever be able to see the light of day again? Or will we forever live in fear?

And so the nightmare continues..

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Previously on MC:SM Rewrite..

Everything in the universe starts out as just a block.. What comes of those blocks is up to those who wield them.. And in every block, there lies the potential to create.. or destroy.

Our friends have traveled far and wide.. in search of the Order of the Stone. And a way to stop the WitherStorm for good..

But even well-laid plans can go away.. the strong can grow weak.. and beloved heroes can fall..

And though some glimmer of hope may remain.. the threat to this world - to its very existence.. is FAR from over..

◦●●◦❀ Chapter 1: Hardships ❀◦●●◦

The sounds of screaming filled the air as a large number of people fled for safety. They have no idea where they were going, but as long as it was away from it. Away from the WitherStorm that was now divided into three. The siblings were bewildered to find that their plan had failed but they didn't focus on that now. Their main focus was on Gabriel, who is behaving strangely.

What really surprised them was that they all believed he was dead. But now that he is alive.. Why was he suddenly acting weirdly? He was there when the Storm was created so why was he so confused?

"Where - where am I? What's going on..?" Gabriel stammered as his eyes wandered around the traumatizing scene. "What is all this?"



"C'mon, we're going to get you out of here!" Jesse said, reaching forward to grab his hand but he quickly withdrew, stepping back in alarm.

"What..?" He murmured. "Who are you?"

Reuben squealed in surprise, confused as he glanced up at Zephyr flying above him, looking just as perplexed. Before the siblings could find a way to answer, they heard someone shouting for them.

"Jesse! Nikki! Jess! Where are you?!" Axel cried from a distance.

The siblings shared the same determined expression before Jess grabbed Gabriel's hand and the four began to head towards his voice.

"Say something, guys!"

"We're coming!" Nikki answered as they approached their friend.

Axel was relieved to see that his friends were still in one piece, but when he spotted Gabriel with them, his eyes widened. "No way, no way! You found Gabriel?!" He gasped.

Gabriel once again looked puzzled. "Who's Gabriel?"

Jesse faced the Storms once more, hearing a loud growl as the Storms continued its rampage. It was even worse than before, the storms regaining their strength as it raged rapidly.

"We need to get out of here, now!" Jesse said.

"This way!" Axel replied, leading them behind a large patch of grass blocks where the others waited for them.

"Guys! You made it!" Olivia sighed in relief as the five of them joined.

"And.. Gabriel?" Lukas gasped, spotting the Warrior with them.

"Did you say Gabriel?" Petra repeated in disbelief.

"Gabriel!" Chris beamed, but before he could say anything else, a tractor beam found them.

"Look out!" Nikki cried as she and the others fled. As they ran, Nikki gasped as a bunch of Endermen teleported by her and instead of fleeing, they headed towards it. She was confused but considering she had bigger things to worry about, she continued on.

Soren however halted, his eyes widening in concern. "Those Endermen are running the wrong way. They'll be killed!" He said.

"Soren?" Jess said as she and Jesse halted to see what the ginger wanted.

"I can't stand by and watch.. I'd be condemning them to death!"

"Soren, what do you think you're doing?!" Jesse asked.

"These Endermen are running directly into danger!"

"You're putting US in danger every second you just stand there!" Nikki snapped. One of the monsters had spotted them and sent an attack heading right for them. Luckily for them, it missed and hit the tree next to them instead. This alerted them to continue running and with a heavy heart, Soren followed.



As they fled, they suddenly heard a voice calling for them. "Jess?! Nikki?! Magnus?! Anybody?!" They shouted. They glanced over to see where the voice was coming from and spotted a familiar face mounted on top of her horse in the distance. She held her amulet up high for them to see, the white, green and

blue bars shining intensely in the darkness.

Jess squinted her eyes before she realized who it was. "Mini! Over here!" She called. Mini heard her and pulled out firework rockets from her inventory, she loaded it in her crossbow before shooting it in the air, creating fireworks in shades of red in the sky to alert them where she was.

"You guys see those fireworks? That's where Mini is. Everyone, go to her. Now!" Jesse ordered. The team did as he said, running in the direction the fireworks came from.

"Jesse! They're falling behind!" Lukas said, noticing Axel helping Petra walk although they barely are making any progress. Petra looked worse now and even her eyes had a slight glow to them.

"Axel! You gotta move faster!" Jess called.

"She's too sick - this is the best we can do!" Axel answered.

"They're not going to be able to outrun it! Or get to Mini. Not on foot!" Lukas said, the siblings sharing worried glances as they realize he might be right.

"We've got to find a way to move faster!" Nikki frowned, trying to think of a plan. "Or we'll all gonna get caught in the tractor beam!"

"We just need to get them moving faster.." Jesse said as Olivia joined them. Right on cue, they heard neighing belonging to a horse. Glancing over, they spotted multiple horses running in their direction with Mini riding the one on the front, guiding them. Once they approached, she got them all to halt as she glanced down at her allies.

"I've gathered as many horses as I could. Will this be enough?" She asked. "Where's Ellegaard-? And is that.." She let out a high pitched gasp when she noticed Gabriel. "Is that.. Is that who I think it is?!"

"We'll explain later, okay?" Nikki replied. "Right now, we need to get going!"

"Everyone, get on!" Jesse ordered. Without a second word, the team mounted on a horse, safely climbing on and holding on tightly.

"Hey, what about us?" Petra panicked. She and Gabriel had yet to mount on a horse just yet.

"C'mon, Jesse, we got this!" Lukas encouraged as he gave his former friend a determined look. "We'll take the reins, and they can just hang on.."

Jesse glared at him and normally, he would've retorted but now seeing how the blonde was now willing to step up, he decided he'll let it slide. Besides, they had to focus on escaping the WitherStorm.

"I've got Petra," he said.

"Then I'll take Gabriel!" Lukas replied.

Jesse held his hand out to Petra, helping her climb on safely. "Hold on, this might be a bumpy ride.." he warned. The redhead didn't answer, wrapping her arms around his torso for comfort. Maggie glanced back as the horses rode off before whimpering and holding onto her brother. She privately wished that things didn't end up this way..

"Come on, horses.." Jess whimpered as the horses rode off. Zephyr flew ahead, not only trying to guide them away from the Storm, but also trying to find shelter for them so they could hide from the Storms as they figured out what to do next. If they couldn't find any shelter then they would have to start the long journey back to the Order's Temple.

Nikki glanced behind them, noticing that the Storms were gaining on them. "Whatever you do, don't look back!" She advised.

"Aah! I looked!" Axel cried, clutching Reuben in his arms.

"Everyone, follow me!" Lukas ordered. As the gang escaped, the siblings and Mini drew out their swords, slashing any witherized or hostile mobs that came their way. Reuben trembled in Axel's arms as he watched his own kind being transformed or slaughtered in front of him and he closed his eyes to prevent himself from seeing any more of this chaos.

"It's gaining on us!" Mini cried as she looked behind her to see the Storms drawing close.

"No offense, but you could use a little practice," Petra huffed.

"First time on a horse here!" Jesse replied.

"Watch it!"

Jesse yelped, spotting the crater in front of them. He was lucky enough to jump over it just in time but he almost lost control of his horse in the process.

"You trying to knock me off this thing, Jesse?" Petra scowled.

"Sorry.."

After dodging tractor beams and blows from the Storms, Zephyr bolted high into the air before diving back down, squeaking joyfully as he flew around Nikki, signaling her to follow him.

"Guys, I think Zephyr found shelter for us!" Nikki informed the rest of the team. "Zephyr, lead the way!"

Zephyr bolted forward, guiding the large group past a couple hills. As the team fled, dodging more blows from the Storms and tractor beams, they spotted massive mountains in the distance, the environment resembling snowy terrains.

"The Snowy Mountains," Mini gasped, recognizing the Mountains. The mountains were huge, but at least it could provide them some barrier away from the Storms.

Petra whimpered a little as she held on. She felt completely hopeless.. she felt like the end was finally coming to them. "I'd turn around to see if it's gaining, but it's all I can do to hold on!" She murmured.

At some point, Jesse dodged a tentacle and as more came their way, he managed to help dodge it, preventing himself, his horse and Petra from getting hit. The Storm, now starting to get

frustrated, aimed a skull at him that landed in front of him and created a large crater but Jesse thought ahead and jumped over it, landing on the other side safely before continuing to flee.

After a couple seconds, the group approached a bridge that was ahead of them. That bridge led them towards the mountains, where they will be able to take shelter.

"There! We need to ride over that-." Nikki was interrupted by a skull that destroyed the bridge seconds before they could reach it. "-..bridge.."

"Oh no!" Jess cried, a tentacle nearly hitting her as a tractor beam hovered over her but it suddenly withdrew in pain when an Enderman screeched loudly, ripping a block from the tentacle. Jess was bewildered, making sure not to look at the Endermen as she processed what just happened. She then glanced back at the WitherStorm, noticing multiple Endermen pulling blocks away from it.

"The Endermen!" Soren exclaimed. "They're slowing it down!"

"Am I seeing Endermen attack a WitherStorm or do my eyes deceive me?" Mini gasped. The rest of the team staring at the surprising scenery blankly.

"Guys, come on!" Olivia said, alerting her friends back to their senses as she hopped off her horse.

"We gotta build a new one - like, right now," Axel added.

The team began reworking the bridge as swiftly as they could with whatever blocks they had on them as Magnus, Maggie, and Chris stayed back to make sure the horses didn't run away and watch for any upcoming mobs that may be witherized or hostile. At some point, a witherized phantom screeched loudly as it dived down towards them, opening its fangs to attack but Magnus dodged, stabbing it dead.

"Y'all hurry up building that damned bridge!" He scowled.

Once the bridge was finished, the team hopped back on and rode off. They used their advantage on the Endermen wisely and as the Storms were being kept busy, they were fortunate enough to successfully escape. It was still a long journey ahead of them but at least they have one last thing to worry about.

"Yeehaw! Whoo!" Axel cheered.

"Axel, you're screaming in my ear," Olivia scowled.

"Sorry."

Zephyr guided the team through the rocky and icy terrain and after what seemed like hours of riding, he had finally found a cave for them to rest in. It wasn't that spacey but it was at least big enough for everyone to fit in. As the team began to take a breather and rest, Mini created a small campfire. The fire kept everyone warm and away from the freezing, cold darkness that shrouded them.

◦●●◉❀ Chapter 2: All Is Lost ❀◉●●◦

"We made it. We actually fucking made it!" Jess rejoiced but she froze when she noticed that no one else shared the same energy, her smile faded. She could feel the despair radiating across the room and it wasn't pretty.

"Jess.. Gabriel was saying some pretty weird stuff back on that horse," Lukas informed as he glanced at Gabriel worriedly. Jesse frowned, his concern for the warrior raising.

"He might have Wither Sickness," Petra guessed.

"I don't know. You never acted the way he's been acting."

"I'll go talk to him," Jess said. Knowing that she's the one that Gabriel got most acquainted with before being held hostage, she figured that it'll be best if she tried talking to him. She slowly approached him, trying her best to comfort him as best as she could.

"Hey, now are you feeling?" She asked. Nikki had approached him as well, curious about his condition as well.

"I-.. I'm afraid I don't feel much like myself at the moment," Gabriel answered.

"Gabriel! It really is you!" Soren beamed. It was obvious the Old Order was still affected by Ellegaard's death, but seeing their old companion alive and well sparked some sort of hope for them.

"They told us you'd kicked it!" Magnus grinned weary.

"Gabriel, it's been so long I-.." Mini rejoiced. "I tried looking for you at EnderCon, I promise but under all that chaos, I couldn't find you! I thought you died! I'm so glad you're okay."

"Yeah! At least something is going well," Maggie agreed.

"I'm beyond delighted that you've survived, Gabriel," Chris said, though his eyes seemed a bit glossy.

"Wha- who are you people?!" Gabriel questioned, backing away his old friends in fright.

"It's me, Magnus!" Magnus said, trying to keep on going.

"C'mon Gabe! Don't be like that," Maggie added. "It's me, Maggie! You used to take Chris, Mini and I to the river, remember?"

"Indeed you did. We used to go there all the time," Chris confirmed. "Don't you recall..? It's Chris."

"Yeah. And you used to teach me your skills before.. well, all this," Mini revealed. "Don't you remember? It's Mini."

Soren's smile faded as he realized what might be the problem. "Old friend, don't you recognize us?" He frowned. "It's Soren. We've known each other for.. a very long time."

"Just - give him some space, for now," Jess sighed. "He may still come out of it."

"I dunno if he'll ever come out of it," Nikki disagreed. "I think the WitherStorm did something to him."

"You mean that thing we just rode on?" Gabriel asked.

"No.. that was a horse."

"What a terrible turn of events.." Soren frowned, feeling all the hope he had been previously feeling leaving him.

Gabriel glanced at the sisters, recognizing them as some of the people he first saw after being freed. "You. You're the ones who rescued me," he said as he approached them. "Tell me please -

what is going on? I remember only blackness.. and then suddenly you both and someone else were there."

"You were caught in the WitherStorm. Trapped," Jess replied, though she sounded emotional as the horrible events that took place in his fortress replayed in her mind.

"For how long?"

"Long enough that it did this to you," Nikki answered.

"Well, it HAS been a couple days," Mini figured, keeping her composure but had trouble trying to.

"It felt like an eternity.." Gabriel murmured, crossing his arms as he shivered. "It was dark.. and foul.. and I was sure I was a goner!"

"Well, you aren't, Gabe," Maggie encouraged as she took his arm to try and get him to sit down. "You made it back alive."

"That's more than I could say for some of us.." Chris lamented, his hands resting in the pockets of his hoodies as he felt the photo Ellegaard gave to him shortly before her passing. He kept it in his pocket for safe keeping. Although Ellegaard wanted him to keep it to remember her, he couldn't bring himself to look at it.

"Oh, man.. Ellie," Magnus sniveled, barely able to say her name without his eyes becoming glossy. "For a second, I almost managed to forget.." A guilty expression was visible on his face, wishing that this was just a bad dream.

"You guys talking about Ellegaard?" Lukas shifted his gaze towards them.

"I just can't believe she's gone. It doesn't feel real," Olivia wept, her voice cracking. Although she spent half the trip trying to impress her, she still felt immense grief that her role-model, someone she looked up to all her life, was now gone forever.

"How? How could this happen?!" Soren suddenly lashed out, his eyes shining in grief, pain and anger. Some of them flinched as he continued to raise his voice. "To lose not just a friend.. But a member of the Order of the Stone!"

"Okay, can someone tell me what the hell went up? What happened back there? Did the plan not work?" Mini inquired, starting to get fed up with the lack of information she's received.

The rest of the team shared worried glances, obviously not wanting to recap the tragic events that went down just minutes before she arrived. After a couple seconds, Jess gave in and spilled everything that happened while she was gone; how they found Soren's fortress, the fight with Ivor, the grinder, them going into the End, finding Soren at last, how the plan failed, Ellegaard's death, and lastly, how they found Gabriel.

Mini was silent, her hand clapping over her mouth as tears began to form. "W-Wait.. that can't be right," she croaked. "Ellegaard can't be gone-! M-Maybe if we head back and-."

"I wish I could say the same. It's just-.. I don't know her that well yet I know that she had a longer life ahead of her cut short all because we failed to see the tentacle coming," Jess sighed as she crossed her arms.

"Guys.. it was my fault," Jesse finally gave in, feeling an immense wave of remorse wash over him. If he hadn't taken Ellegaard's armor then she would've been saved. "I'm the one who took Ellegaard's armor."



"But you couldn't have known what was going to happen," Olivia said, frowning that her friend was taking the blame for something that wasn't his fault.

"She's right. Don't blame yourself, kid. I, uh.. never blame myself for anything," Magnus agreed, though he sounded hesitant. Deep down, he was only saying that to comfort him while trying to push his own guilt and emotions aside.

"Jesse, Ellegaard gave her armor to you. She trusted you enough to hand her armor away so you could go on," Nikki encouraged. "Dead or alive, all I know is, she'd want us to keep fighting, no matter what. In fact, she'd tell us that we had to!"

"Would she..?" Chris murmured.

"Yeah. Of course she would," Mini confirmed.

Jesse let her words flow in his mind, though he didn't have time to answer as Soren let out a loud groan of frustration.

"Being emotional is getting us nowhere!" He barked as he turned his back on the rest of the team. "What I want to know is, what happened out there today? Why is that thing still alive?! My instructions were SIMPLE!" He then approached Jesse. "You were in the middle of everything. What went wrong?!"

"All we managed to do is make things worse," Jesse answered, trying to be as reasonable as he can. "The Command Block is still out there, Soren!"

Soren's eyes widened as soon as he mentioned the Command Block. "Shit.." he grumbled. "And to make matters worse, we've got from one WitherStorm - to three!" He then began to pace in a circle. "Our plan was a total failure! I should've cast the foul thing into the abyss! Why didn't I destroy that fucking block ages ago?"

"Look, our plan didn't work, so we obviously need a new one," Nikki tried to reason as she stepped up. "The question is: what-do-we-do?"

"Why are you asking me?!" Soren scowled. "Am I expected to know every last thing in the universe?" He then sighed. All this yelling will take them nowhere. "I need a moment to think." He then stormed out of the cave, leaving everyone else shaken up by his explosive behavior.

"Is he always like this?" Gabriel asked, shifting his attention towards Magnus.

"You have NO idea," Magnus cringed, not even surprised by how the ginger lashed out. Gabriel then shifted his attention towards the entrance of the cave, spotting Lukas with his back turned against him. When he saw the ocelot face sewn on the back of his leather jacket, his eyes widened slightly, recognizing it from where.

"That jacket.. I recognize it!" He gasped.

"Lukas always wears that jacket," Jess said, wondering if he had recognized it from EnderCon.

"No - there were other people wearing that very same jacket when I was thrown from the monster!" The warrior remembered before backing away, holding his head in pain as if it'll bring back his memory. "Ugh.. it hurts just to think about.."

"Hey, hey, it's okay," Magnus consoled as he and Mini held his arm, helping him sit back down so he could take a rest.

Lukas stood there with his eyes shot wide before he glanced over at Jess, hoping they were thinking about the same thing. "Jess.. what if what Gabriel said is true.." he murmured. "I mean.. what do you think..? I thought for sure they were gone, but.. if they were just trapped in the WitherStorm.."

"Lukas, your friends could still be out there!" Jess realized, feeling happy for the blonde.

"I know! Which means - I've gotta go after them!" Lukas said, but when he noticed that her face fell, he sighed. "They might need me, Jess.."

Jess was about to reply, but froze when she noticed Jesse, Axel and Olivia by Petra's side, trying to give her some comfort but it didn't hide how her conditions were progressively worsening and it didn't even look like she would survive much longer.

"Whoa.. I suddenly feel really dizzy.." Petra murmured, holding her arm as she struggled to stand.

"Easy, easy, I gotcha.." Axel consoled, allowing her to use him for support as he gently helped her sit.



Jesse held her hand, his eyes filled with concern and fear. "Petra, how are you doing?" He asked. "You feeling any better..?"

"'Better' is relative. If I just sit here and don't move.. or breathe.. it's almost bearable," Petra responded halfheartedly.

"Man, if it wasn't for Ivor, she wouldn't even be like this," Axel huffed, his eyes narrowing in annoyance. Had Ivor not created the WitherStorm then they wouldn't have to worry about any of this; they would still get to live lives like normal teenagers, Petra wouldn't be on the brink of

death, Gabriel wouldn't have amnesia, Ellegaard would still be alive and countless of people would've been saved.

"No kidding," Olivia agreed.

"That's.. not exactly true," Petra said, grabbing their attention. "Ivor built the Wither, sure.. but he couldn't have done it without that skull I gave him." She then sighed. "If I'd just taken a second to think about it.. But all I cared about was getting that stupid diamond."

"Petra, don't blame yourself for someone else's actions. There's no way you could've known what would happen," Jesse comforted, placing a hand on her cheek while being careful not to hurt her fragile nature. "Nobody's ever seen anything like this!"

The redhead hesitated before bowing her head. "..Still. I'm going to do everything I can to make this right."

"Petra, look, I know this isn't easy to hear but - you're too sick to be going anywhere. You saw what happened earlier! If Mini didn't come in time then who knows what would've happened," Nikki tried to reason. "You need to take a rest."

"I'm not that sick!" Petra argued.

"Maybe you should rest in this cave for a while," Axel suggested. "I mean, it's safe.. defensible.."

"If I say I'm fine, then I'm-." She was interrupted by a cough. "-fine!"

"C'mon, Petra! You know that you're not fine!" Nikki said, starting to get frustrated with her stubbornness.

"If you try to keep going.. I'm afraid you're probably not gonna make it," Olivia agreed, frowning.

"No. No way. I'm not a quitter."

"We're Not saying you are."

"I'm sorry but Olivia, Nikki, and Olivia have a point," Jesse said. "You staying here is the right move. You'll never get better if we keep pushing you."

Petra frowned, starting to feel as more useless than ever. "..But I want to be there for you guys!" She protested.

Jesse gently took her hand. "I know you do. And you will.."

The redhead then sighed, finally giving in. "Maybe you're right.."

"It's the right call, Jesse," Olivia said.

"I hope so," Jesse sighed.

Jess sighed in relief, realizing that they had it covered. She froze when she heard someone speaking and when she glanced over, she noticed Lukas digging through a chest.

"Gravel? No. Dirt? Don't think so.." he murmured. He sighed before closing the chest and approaching the front of the entrance, staring up at the dark, mysterious sky. He had some time to think about his decision and although not everyone would agree, he had to. He needed to make sure they're okay..

"Lukas, what are you doing?" Questioned a familiar voice behind him. He flinched, whipping his head around and spotted Jess there with a concerned expression on her face.

"I told you, I'm going after my friends," he replied. "I thought the other Ocelots were dead.. but if they're not, I need to go find them."

Jess hesitated, unsure if she should really let him go out by himself. They had been through a lot together and she even thought that this might be the perfect chance to finally fix Lukas' and Jesse's broken friendship. She couldn't continue on without knowing that at least the two tried

fixing their problems and on top of that; the thought of him going out in the cold by himself with three monsters raging scared her.

Lukas noticed her frightened expression, placing his hands on her cheek. "Look, I'm grateful to you guys for bringing me this far.." he assured her. "But I can't leave them alone out there. Not with three WitherStorms raging."

"You can't just up and leave, Lukas - you're part of our team!" Jess protested, hugging him tightly. Lukas was caught off guard by this but he gently returned the hug, wrapping his arms around her. "We need you. I.. need you."

"You saying that just reminds me that I left my team," Lukas sighed.

"Lukas.."

He then separated from the hug, placing his hands on her shoulders. "Look. You and me, we've made a pretty good team so far. I'd even call us friends. So I hope you'll understand why I need to go help my OLD friends," he said. As he continued, Jesse glanced over at them and frowned. Instead of lashing out however, he decided to eavesdrop. "Jess, I appreciate everything you did for me. And.. I know I'm letting you down, but as soon as this problem is over, I'll go back to Jesse and apologize. I'll tell him everything and promise him that I'll try to do better in the future. I don't know if he'll hear me out though.."

Jess gave him a warm smile. "He'll listen. And I'll be right here by your side when he does. I'm proud of you, Lukas," she said before taking a deep breath. "I can't believe I'm saying this, but.. If your heart's telling you to go, then you gotta go. Otherwise you'd be.. heartless or something."

Lukas chuckled a little before smiling and placing his hand on her cheek. "Thank you, Jess," he said. "I'll find them, and then.. I'll find you again too. I promise."

"Thanks.." she murmured, placing her hand on top of his. The two trotted to where the horses were resting, collecting one of them and before the blonde could ride away, Jesse approached them. Lukas froze, wondering what he was going to say. Nikki joined her sister, the two watching them curiously.



"Jesse.." Lukas said, feeling a small wave of remorse hit him as Jesse gave him a glare. Instead of hiding away from his fears, he glanced at him bravely. "Jesse. I know you might not forgive me after this but it'll put a weight off my chest knowing that I tried." He then took a deep breath.

"Jesse, I-.. I'm sorry for everything. And I'm not just saying that, I'm actually very sorry. I wanted to help you, I really did but every time I tried I-.. I felt weak. Like there's something trying to hold me back. I wanted to win someone else's approval and that ruined my friendship with someone who actually cared about me. It doesn't excuse what I did but I'm trying to change. For the better. I appreciate you guys keeping me this far and I understand if you don't want me around anymore-."

Before he could go on, Jesse placed a hand on his shoulder. Lukas froze, staring into Jesse's narrowed dark brown eyes. They silently locked eye contact for a moment before Jesse finally spoke. "Lukas.. I can't forgive you," he said before his expression lightened. "But thank you. That's all I wanted to hear. I'm sorry for giving you a hard time. I was mostly blinded by rage and heartbreak I guess."

Lukas felt a small smile curling on his lips, feeling a warm feeling taking over him. "I deserved it.." he murmured. "But I'm glad to be part of the team."

"So does that mean you guys are cool?" Nikki suddenly asked as crossed her arms.

"I wouldn't say cool-cool," Jesse corrected. "We'll see what happens in the future. As much as I'm surprised you're leaving, I hope you find your friends again soon."

"Thank you.. and Jesse..? As soon as this adventure is over, I promise I'll make it up to you," Lukas promised.

"Right.."

Without another word, the blonde got ready for his long journey. After collecting enough food and clothing to sustain him and keep him warm, he got on his horse. Before leaving, he met eye contact with the siblings before riding off into the dark, snowy night. Jess watched as he rode off until he was no longer in sight. She sighed, the white smoke coming out of her mouth as she held her arms to keep herself warm.

Jesse was just about to head back inside with Nikki, but when he noticed Jess still standing right there, he sighed. "Jess? Let's head back inside," he said.

"Coming.." Jess murmured. With a heavy heart, she slowly made her way back inside.

Nikki didn't like the gloomy feeling that loomed over the group ever since the WitherStorm started. She was glad they had all survived and that there might be other survivors out there, but nothing felt the same since the WitherStorm had been unleashed. She thought over the events that brought them here; going through the Nether, finding Magnus and Ellegaard, going through so much to find Soren just for their plan to blow up in their faces.

She thought hard about everything. About all the hardships they had to go through, endless arguments and endless adventures and at the end of the day, the only thing that matters is that they're alive. Physically, at least. She wasn't sure mentally that they would be okay. She wasn't even sure if they would be able to put this behind them and just.. be kids again.

Her thoughts were interrupted when she felt a soft bump on her leg. Glancing down, she noticed Reuben rubbing his head against her leg. She plastered on the most warming smile she could muster as she began to rub his head. "Hey buddy," she greeted. "You doing okay?" Reuben whined anxiously but showed that he was fine, which relieved Nikki a bit. "Of course you are. Wish I could say the same for everyone else.."

She then shifted her attention towards the horses, noticing Jess was nuzzling the one with big teal eyes and his fur as white as snow. Mini stood next to her. Since she figured that Magnus, Maggie and Chris had everything covered, she decided to make sure that the horses were comfortable. Since she had nothing else to do, Nikki decided to go and join them.

"Am I glad YOU came along," Jess cooed. "Just don't tell Reuben I said that. He might get jealous."

"How are the horses looking?" Nikki inquired.

"Tired, but they're okay," Mini answered. "Same as the rest of us."

"I'd have to say; you appeared just in time. Thank you for saving us all back there," Jess sighed.

"I could hardly imagine what could've happened if you didn't come, Mini."

Mini suddenly looked guilty, scratching the back of her neck nervously. "Yeah.." she murmured.

Nikki noticed this, raising an eyebrow curiously. "Mini? Is there something wrong?" She asked before crossing her arms. "Did something happen at the Temple while we were gone?"

"I-.." Mini started, but meeting the concerned expressions on her friends' faces, she took a deep breath and went on. "I have a confession to make.." She watched as the sisters' eyes widened.

"But if I say this, promise me you won't say anything to anyone else?"

"Go on," Jess replied, both her and Nikki now starting to get suspicious.

"Remember I said that I wanted to stay behind just in case there's any survivors? That.. was a lie," Mini revealed, the sisters' sharing stunned expressions as she went on. "The real reason I wanted to stay behind.. was because I couldn't live with myself anymore. I knew where Soren was the entire time. The others didn't know and I-.. I-.. I promised to keep it a secret because Soren said he was eventually going to come out himself. But things kept dragging on, I-.. I don't know why I did it. I just.. needed time to myself, I guess."

"You knew where he was this entire time..?" Nikki repeated, in complete disbelief. "And you didn't say anything?!"

"I know it was bitchy, but I'm sorry!" Mini pleaded, her dark brown eyes glossy. "It's.. complicated. I went out to go find you guys but I was too late. And now..



Ellegaard's gone. All because I was too scared to admit to the Order about this dumbass secret."

"You shouldn't blame yourself, Mini," Jess frowned. "Sure, what you did was wrong but Ellegaard sacrificed herself out there to save all of us. None of us could've guessed what was about to happen."

"Yet why do I feel like I could've prevented it..?"

Jess didn't know how to answer and she could tell Nikki didn't either. After a few moments of silence, she took a deep breath. "Look, I don't know what went on with the Order back then, but Mini, what you did was very wrong," she said. "We could've gotten to Soren faster had you not kept this from us, but I understand if coming out to us was hard. Especially since we don't know what went on between you or Soren or the Order."

"..yeah.."

"Listen, I'm still kind of upset that you hid this from us. But I could understand if it was for personal reasons. It seems like everything in the Order is hiding something," Nikki sighed.

"When are you planning to tell everyone else?"

Mini glanced over at Magnus, Maggie and Chris talking to Gabriel for a moment before glancing back at the sisters. "When I'm ready. But let me tell them," she promised. The sisters both frowned. The last person who said this was Petra, which ended in Lukas having to inform everyone instead of her, but considering this time this wasn't their place to speak on, they both nodded. Mini was relieved by this but her attention soon switched towards the entrance. "I wish I had the strength to try and talk to Soren though. I've never seen him so.. stressed."

The sisters glossed their eyes towards the entrance, spotting the ginger silently standing outside in the cold, fluffy white snow. His back was faced towards them so they couldn't see his facial expression.

"He looks so upset.." Jess' frown deepened.

"I'll try to talk to him," Nikki offered.

"Thanks, Nikki," Mini said as the brunette departed outside. She shivered slightly, the cold air hitting her as she approached the ginger. She froze, at first not knowing what to say until she eventually spoke.

"Look, Soren.."

"I said I need some space, Nikki," Soren interrupted, though his voice cracked slightly. A downhearted expression was visible on his face and although he tried his best to stay strong, every time he tried, he felt like breaking down.

Nikki hesitated. "..actually, you said you needed time to think," she corrected. "So.. did you think of anything?"

"Not really. I'll let you know if I do."

Nikki wanted to ask more things but respecting his boundaries, she decided not to. She sighed, turning around to leave. Before she did however, she faced the stressed ginger once more.

"Mini's worried about you. Jess and I know.. about your little secret," she murmured before trotting back inside the cave. Soren's eyes widened with her words. He was surprised she didn't lash out at him or Mini for the secret they kept for years, but it didn't matter. He didn't want his friends to know about it. Enough people have been hurt already.

Nikki, now back inside the comfort of the cave, noticed that Jess and Mini were now with Gabriel, trying to help Magnus and Maggie regain his memory back but they were unsuccessful. Chris leaned against the wall, this time remaining quiet. Nikki wasn't sure if he had given up or couldn't bring himself to continue.

"I'm not gonna lie, man. But we've pulled through worse, right?" Magnus said, trying to pull their spirits up. He mainly said this to assure himself however, attempting to hide his true emotions for his sister and friend.

"Yeah, totally. Way way wayyy worse," Maggie emphasized. She then scratched the back of her neck nervously. "Well, mainly you guys but y'know what I mean."

"Have we?" Gabriel questioned.

The siblings glanced over at Chris, hoping that he'll participate. Noticing this, Chris frowned uncomfortably. He then piped up from the wall and nodded his head, seemingly agreeing with the siblings.

"How's it going..?" Nikki inquired.

"Well.." Jess started, unsure how to respond.

"Tell me, Jess.. who IS this person? He keeps insulting me," Gabriel huffed, glaring at Magnus.

"One minute I think I'm talking to a friend.. the next, I'm being made fun of!"

"That right there is Magnus! Everybody knows Magnus," Nikki quickly said before her sister could respond. "And Maggie. They're siblings. And Mini, she's your apprentice. Or WAS your apprentice. And Chris, he's-.. um.." She froze, not knowing how to reintroduce Chris without mentioning Ellegaard. She wasn't close to him, but she was unsure how affected he was by her abrupt passing. She didn't want to accidentally upset him further.

"Magnus, Maggie.. Mini, Chris, hmm? And HOW do I know them exactly?" Gabriel inquired. "I sense we have a history, but.. I feel I need a little reminder."

"They're your friends. They've BEEN your friends for a very long time," Jess answered.

"Really?"

"Really. You go waa-haaaay back."

"It isn't working," Chris said as he crossed his arms. "He doesn't remember. There's nothing we can do."

"Hey, don't say that! We have to try something," Maggie frowned, not wanting to give up so easily.

"Just look at what we're dealing with, Maggie!" Chris snapped, catching the rest of the team by surprise. "Whatever the WitherStorm did, we can't just undo it so easily. Gabriel could be trapped like this for the rest of his life for all we know!"

"You don't know that!" Mini retorted, though her eyes were glossy as her voice shook. "Gabriel is still in there somewhere. I just know it! He can't just forget everything so easily..! I-.. he just can't.."

Mini couldn't go on, covering her face as tears began to fall. Maggie threw her arms around her friend to try her best and comfort her. As she did, she glanced over at Chris, her eyes gleaming in concern.

"Chris..?" She said slowly.

"You guys don't get it. You'll never get it.." Chris murmured. "Not everything is going to be the way we want things to be. Bad things happen and there's nothing we could do about it. Learn that lesson.. before you get hurt." Without another word, he turned around and walked towards a corner, curling up into a ball. His back was faced towards his friends as an uncomfortable silence radiated across the room.

"Is he okay?" Gabriel pondered, wondering why everyone was getting so upset. "He seems.. distressed?"

"Yeah, no kidding," Jess frowned.

"He just needs some alone time," Magnus sighed, a wave of sympathy hitting him. He knew what was exactly bothering the young boy and it pained him to see him like this.

"You.. don't think he's right though, is he?" Maggie said, beginning to lose hope.

"No of course not!" Nikki assured her. "Maybe.. you should talk to him about your past - something only YOU would know about?"

"Like what?" Mini frowned, trying to push her emotions to the side. "It's been so long since we've seen each other.."

"Here's one," Jess spoke up. "Talk a little about Ellegaard."

"Ellie. Yes. She was.. really something," Magnus chuckled nervously as he tried to shield his grief. "Smart. Funny. Amazing with Redstone.. Heck, she was the one person among us who didn't even need the-.. the.." He froze, feeling all eyes on him as he tried to make something up so he wouldn't have to talk about.. the incident.

"Didn't need the what?" Gabriel inquired.

"Y'know? Nevermind. Point is, you liked her. A lot. We all did," he finished. Jess glanced at him, raising an eyebrow suspiciously.

"Thank you for sharing that with me," Gabriel thanked before glancing over at the sisters. "And Jess and.. Nikki, was it? Thank you too. You've both been a big help here. I-.. I need to repay your kindness. I'm not sure how, exactly.. but I want to express my gratitude."

"It's no problem - we'd have done it for anyone," Nikki grinned.

"Yeah. If you need anything, just give us a shout," Jess assured him.

"All the same - you have my thanks," Gabriel smiled before glancing at his old friends. "Now then.. tell me more about this 'Ellegaard.'"

"She-.. uhh.. was pretty smart," Mini confessed as she fidgeted with her fingers. "She was actually the main reason how I managed to perfect my Redstone skills. She was a great teacher and an even better mentor and I-.. I'm going to miss her so much.."

Maggie wrapped her arms around her to give her some comfort as her friend when she noticed tears falling down her cheeks. "Hey, it's okay.. she's in a better place now," she consoled before glancing over at her older brother. "Magnus..?"

"Man, I don't even know where to begin.." Magnus admitted, starting to get frustrated that he couldn't bring himself to talk about the fallen engineer.

"Hey, don't worry! We'll handle this. You should probably take a break," Maggie assured him.

"Magnus? Are you.. okay..?" Jess asked, noticing how he seemed.. distracted.

"Huh-?" Magnus raised a brow before realizing what she said. "Oh-! Uhh.. yeah! I'm fine. Just.. feeling a little off, I guess."

Jess wasn't too convinced and she crossed her arms as she gave him a concerned expression.

"It's okay to feel upset too. It's not good if you try to hold it all in."

Magnus stared at her for a moment before shaking his head. "Thanks for asking, but.. I'll be fine. Really," he replied. "I.. should be getting back to work. Gabriel needs me now more than ever."

"Right.." Jess frowned, watching as the griever departed from the conversation, focusing his attention on Gabriel. Although they technically aren't that close, she still felt worried for him. Deep down, she knew that he wasn't feeling okay..

Reuben nearby had been curled up in a ball in the corner this entire time, not feeling the best ever since they entered the cave. Of course, he always felt down ever since the WitherStorm was unleashed and they were forced to go from place to place to find a way to defeat it but at least then he had some sort of hope.

Now, it felt like all his remaining hope had vanished, now even doubting that they would live to see the end of this dark age. Oinking solemnly, he glanced over at Petra before approaching her and attempting to lay his head on her, but the redhead recoiled sharply before he could do so.

"Sorry Reuben, I don't feel like company," she apologized. Reuben frowned in response as he bowed his head. He oinked wistfully, feeling a wave of despair wash over him. Out of complete impulse, he straightened his posture before bolting out of the cave. Zephyr noticed this, flying off Nikki's shoulder and squeaking in alarm to alert his owner about the little piglet running off.

Nikki, seemingly getting what he meant, shifted her gaze towards the entrance of the cave, spotting Reuben escaping into the winter wonderland they were hiding from. "Reuben!" She called as she sprinted after him, her older sister following.

Jesse was at first confused when he noticed his sisters leaving the cave, but realizing who they were running after, he stood and followed in presue. "Reuben! Not again," he groaned. Once the siblings found themselves outside, they shivered slightly as the cold air hit them. It didn't matter however. What mattered to them was if their friend was okay.

"Reuben?!" Jess called, hoping to get a response. Instead of their friend making an appearance, they spotted the WitherStorm raging in the distance, just a couple miles away from them. They felt themselves frozen in fear as their eyes remained glued to the monstrous beast they tried so hard to escape from. It had just been under an hour or so yet it had found them already.

Jesse broke his gaze away from the Storm, noticing Reuben standing by the edge of the mountain. He seemed to be watching the Storm as well and was trembling slightly. Possibly from the cold or the ever growing anxiety. Jesse sighed, approaching the young piglet and kneeled to his height.

"Don't run off on us like that, okay?" He said. Reuben oinked in response, assuring him that he just needed some time alone. The two shifted their attention towards Jess and Nikki, who were watching the WitherStorm eating away the world in such a short distance. Zephyr was resting on Nikki's shoulder, leaning on her neck to keep himself warm.

The two joined them and they silently stood there for a moment before Jesse finally spoke. "I don't want to lose you. Any of you guys. You understand?" He said. Reuben huffed in reply, pointing out how they all splitted up before, even at some point splitting up to recruit Magnus and Ellegaard. Jesse sighed as he crossed his arms. "Yeah, I know you've run off before.. but things are different now. We've lost too many people already."

As he spoke, Nikki scratched behind Zephyr's ears, showing him some love and affection despite the world crumbling around them. "Right.." she murmured. "But I can't help but to feel.. I dunno.. scared? I don't know if we'll actually be able to make it out of this alive."



"Even if that's the case, the world needs us. All of us," Jesse replied, trying his best to lift their spirits up. "So much of it has already been reduced to bedrock.. and it's up to us to save the rest of it.." Reuben whined as Jesse pulled him close and even Zephyr seemed unsure.

"Well, maybe that is a lot of pressure for just teenage siblings and a couple animals. But we have to find a way," Jesse encouraged as he watched the Storm slowly approach them. "We need to find a way. Together."

"Will we.. be able to do it?" Nikki asked as she held her arms to keep herself warm. "What if we fail? What if we're too late? Remember what we talked about back in Soren's fortress-? Why us? Why now.."

"I don't know. This is all scary.." Jess admitted, but she can't deny that Jesse had a point. If they weren't going to save the world then who was? "But we can't just sit around and watch as more people die. We're all what the world has left to offer."

Jesse wrapped his arms around his sisters, pulling them both close as he tried to prevent himself from showing too much emotion. "I love you guys. I haven't shown it nowadays but no matter what happens, I'll always love you guys and I don't want to lose you. Not one of you," he murmured. "Besides, siblings together..?"

"Family forever.." his sisters finished. The siblings leaned on each other to keep the other warm and safe from the cold, depressing night. They imagined what would've happened had things been different. They imagined themselves when they were at their highest, remembering how their older brother and youngest sister were still out there, safe from the WitherStorm's clutches. And it must stay that way.

As they sat there, waiting for the cold to take over them, they heard voices seemingly arguing in a distance. Snapping his eyes back open, Jesse slowly turned his head towards the direction of the voices. He could tell Jess and Nikki heard them too, their attention towards the direction the voices were coming from.

"That's what I said, isn't it?"

Curious, Zephyr flapped his wings, flying off Nikki's shoulder and towards the source of the voices. It was coming from higher grounds accessible through a ladder. It was so near the cave they were resting in, the siblings were surprised they didn't notice it before. Nothingness, they followed the voices, wondering who it was arguing on such a night.

"Just as you 'helped' us once before?" Huffed a second voice.

"This isn't about the past! It's about the future!"

"There are THREE of those things now!"

"You say it like it's MY fault!"

"It IS your fault!"

"Oh, take responsibility for ONCE, Soren!"

Soren? The dots were all connecting. No wonder his voice sounded so familiar. However, who was the person he was with? They figured they must know them as well since they found his voice familiar too.

"I did that by locking the Command Block away!" Soren scowled.

"So only you could use it."

"Do you still not realize how dangerous it is?"

"Oh, the bitter irony. 'Soren the Architect.'"

"I don't need lectures from you!"

"That's debatable."

"Maybe you should leave, Ivor."

"If I do that, the world falls."

"Oh, I forgot! Oh-! Oh-! YOU have a plan!"

Ivor? Of course! Who else would be out in the middle of the night? How did Ivor find them? The last time they saw the brewer, he locked them up in Soren's fortress. Nikki was the first to climb up the ladder, spotting Soren and Ivor at the top arguing. They didn't notice her yet, nor did they notice her siblings or Reuben climbing up the ladder to join her.

"Soren, you need to listen to me!" Ivor tried to reason.

"Oh, what good has that ever come of that?" Soren scoffed.

"What are you doing here, Ivor?" Nikki scowled as she stomped towards the middle aged men. "Come to lock us in another room? Perhaps you would like to throw another splash potion on us. Do it, I dare you!"

"I came to offer my help," Ivor frowned.

"Bah! He's been following us!" Soren revealed.

"It's not like that! You need to hear me out!" Ivor said. Jesse, Nikki and Ivor were glaring daggers at him, however Jess was curious as to what he had to say. Was he really going to help them or was it just another trick? Ivor turned his back on the four as he spoke. "What you don't understand is - you all are in very great danger."

Soren stammered sarcastically before answering. "Uh-Uh-Obviously!"

"No - I mean specifically this group!" The brewer announced. "The WitherStorm isn't acting randomly. It's following Gabriel!"

Jess' eyes widened in surprise by the reveal. "Gabriel?" She repeated in a gasp.

"You see, I.. May have programmed it to.. follow his amulet."

The siblings shared worried glances as Soren stared at his old friend, feeling his anger rise like wildfire. "You mean the Order's amulet?!"

"Yes, Soren. That amulet!"

"That explains why the WitherStorm's been following us," Jesse realized, putting two-in-two together.

"But.. Gabriel wasn't even with you when it attacked Redstonia and BoomTown," Ivor pointed out, confused as to what Jesse meant.

"I had the Amulet, Ivor! I have it all along!" Jess huffed, pulling the Amulet out from her pocket, the blue, dark blue, white and green bars glowing immensely.

"And Mini's amulet! She said that it was made from a piece of Gabriel's Amulet right?" Nikki added. "Since it was programmed to follow Gabriel's amulet, it must've begun following Mini's amulet too!"

"What? I-.. I didn't know.."

"Ivor, you fool!" Soren scolded, groaning in frustration. "You've created a monster that's following Jess and Mini!" He turned his back on the group. "And it's only getting stronger."

"You don't think I realize that?" Ivor replied. "Nothing could stop those things. Nothing even hurts them!"

"Well.. except Endermen," Nikki remembered.

"Endermen?" Ivor repeated in confusion.

"Nikki-?" Jesse glanced down at his younger sister, wondering what she had to say. Soren at first was confused, but remembering the events that took place before they arrived at the cave, his eyes shot wide in realization.

"Nikki's right!" He said. "The Wither's gaze passed over them.. and they went wild. If I hadn't seen it with my own eyes.."

"We actually just saw a bunch of Endermen pull blocks off a WitherStorm," Nikki explained.

"So..?" Ivor replied, wanting to hear a plan.

"So enough of them working together, might be able to destroy a WitherStorm entirely!" Soren theorized, beginning to pace around in a small circle. "It's a promising concept, at least in theory.. IF I'm seeing all the pieces correctly.."

"But to actually destroy a WitherStorm.. we'd need hundreds of them!" Jesse pointed out.

"Where are we supposed to find enough Endermen?"

"Maybe Soren's fortress will be enough?" Jess spoke. "Remember when we were leaving the End and they all started teleporting there to escape the mess we left behind?"

"There's probably more than enough of them taking refuge in my fortress.." Soren agreed, glancing over at her. "..an unintended side effect of you flooding the End!"

"This is just like the old days, Soren," Ivor reminisced. "You and your crazy ideas.."

"HUSH, IVOR, FOR ONCE!" Soren raised his voice as he stormed over to his old friend. His shouting made the siblings flinch and even Ivor seemed surprised, but he didn't utter a word as the ginger huffed, taking a moment to clear his throat. "The question is; how to bring the Storms and the Endermen together? Endermen aren't pets - they don't follow orders. At least, not from mere mortals.."

"The WitherStorms are already chasing us," Jesse said. "If we just get them to chase us to your fortress again.."

Soren caught on immediately. "Yes, yes that's it!" He exclaimed. "They'll be caught between a rock and a hard place!"

"If we can't bring the Endermen to the WitherStorms.. we bring the WitherStorms to the Endermen!" Jesse stated.

Ivor was impressed. He thought it was a genius plan, but he knew they were forgetting about one small thing. "Just one problem. You're forgetting about the Command Block," he pointed out.

"Oh. Yes. It's clear now that no weapon can destroy it, not even a Formidi-Bomb," Soren frowned.

"Actually, I-.. may have the solution to that," Ivor said. "You see, when I first took possession of the Command Block-."

"You mean stole it."

"-yes, well, I created a failsafe. A backup plan, for just in case."

"Well I'd say 'just in case' is here!"

"And I'm inclined to agree."

"Actually it was when the WitherStorm was just unleashed," Nikki corrected.

"What kind of 'failsafe,' exactly?" Jess inquired.

"An enchanting book. One that contains the power of the Command Block itself," the brewer revealed. "Use it to enchant a weapon.. and you'll be able to smash the Command Block to bits. Forever."

"Yes.. yes, that's it!" Soren figured. "It could very well solve all our problems!"

"Then what are we waiting for? Let's go get that book!" Jesse urged.

"Just one problem," Ivor said. "It's at my secret lab.. which is.. sort of far away."

"How far could it possibly be?" Nikki challenged.

"Let's just say it's the farthest place a person could travel before being utterly-."

He was interrupted by a loud, familiar growl. The small group flinched in surprise, startled. The siblings knew what it was, however Soren and Ivor both seemed perplexed.

"Oh dear - what was that?" Soren gulped. Without another word, they raced down the ladder and back towards the entrance of the cave. The rest of the team probably heard the loud growl

as well, everyone standing outside, their eyes glued to the monstrous beast raging in front of them from a distance. It was only a matter of time before it would hit them and Jesse felt the fear radiating through his friends.

"I can't believe it found us so quickly.." Petra fretted.

"We're not safe here, are we..?" Chris shivered.

"It just keeps coming for us.." Axel frowned.

"Well we can't stand around and wait for it.." Olivia pointed out. Despite being just as afraid as anyone else, she didn't want to stand around as the Storm only approached them.

"So what do we do?!" Maggie asked.

"Guys, there's a reason it's been following us!" Jesse spoke up, grabbing the group's attention.

"Ivor says it's because of the amulet that Gabriel-."

"Ivor! It IS you!" Magnus roared as he stomped toward the brewer. Mini, Maggie and Chris followed behind him, all three of them looking less than pleased to see him.

"Am I NOT glad to see you! You've got a LOT of explaining to do," Mini huffed, however Ivor kept a calm demeanor.

"Nice to see you too, Magnus," he replied. "You too, Mini. You've grown, haven't you?"

"Hello. My name is Gabriel," Gabriel greeted as he approached his old friend, holding out his hand for a handshake.

Ivor placed his hands on his hips, staring at his hand in disbelief before staring even more at him. He then shifted his gaze towards everybody else. "Somebody pitch me," he said sarcastically. Gabriel now felt a little awkward, withdrawing his hand.

"Anyway.. Ivor figured out the WitherStorms are drawn to the Amulet," Jess said, pulling the Amulet from her pocket. "So we're going to lure them back to Soren's fortress and destroy the Command Block with an enchanted super-weapon!"

"You figured all that out just now?!" Mini questioned.

"The point is, we need to get moving. We aren't safe," Ivor alerted them. "Not as long as we have that Amulet."

"I'll take it," Axel offered, gripping the Amulet with one hand while giving Jess a determined expression to hide his fear creeping upon him deep down.

Jesse's eyes shot wide as he stared at his friend. "You can't!" He protested. "Axel, we'll think of another plan. You can't just throw yourself into danger."

Axel felt a lump in his throat as he realized the sacrifice he would have to make. He knew it would be too much to handle, but he's tired of constantly putting his needs before others. This entire time, all his friends were stepping out of their boundaries, doing things they could never dream of doing. He watched them grow and change yet deep down he's always felt like something was wrong. Something was missing. And now he knew why.

"I can and I have to," he murmured.

"But you could be killed!" Olivia objected, agreeing with Jesse that they'll find a better way to work things out.

"We ALL could, Olivia."

"There's no way I can let you do that, Axel," Jesse frowned, approaching his friend. "We've been through too much together that I-.. look, I don't want to lose you.."



Axel felt flattered that Jesse was worried for him, but he couldn't continue to sit around as the Storms roamed free. "You don't understand, Jesse. I'm not asking. I thought you'd trust me by now. You, Jess and Nikster go make that super-weapon. I'll meet you back at Soren's fortress," he said. When he noticed Jesse's eyes were

glossy, he placed a hand on his shoulder. "Hey, don't worry about me. Remember what Velv used to always say whenever we were scared out of our minds when we were younger?"

Jesse thought for a moment, trying to remember the reference he was trying to make. "E-Either go big or.. go home?" He recalled.

Axel nodded. "This is my chance to go big," he said. "And even if it's a little too much I-- even if me or someone else dies, it's an honor that I got to know you, Jesse." He then gave his friend a huge hug, trying to keep himself from crying as Jesse slowly returned the embrace, resting his head on his shoulder. The hug was brief, yet it felt like it could go on forever. Once the two separated, Axel faced Jess, who still seemed unsure about letting him go.

"Axel, are you sure..?" She challenged.

"Of course not," Axel replied, a sad smile resting on his face.

"But you'll have three WitherStorms chasing wherever you go!" Olivia pointed out.

"Goggle girl's right. You sure you could handle this alone, pal?" Maggie inquired, looking equally as concerned about his decision.

"If things get too intense, I'll duck in the Nether or something," Axel shrugged. "But one thing that I can't do is sit around and watch more people get hurt." He then crossed his arms, a guilty

expression sitting on his face. "I'm tired of always being the selfish one. Can I do just this one thing? Please..?"

Axel gave his friend determinate, almost pleading eyes. Jess couldn't find the right words, her eyes beginning to water as she stared up at her old friend. She was impressed that he was willing to step up to help distract the Storms long enough so they could get the weapons to defeat it. Even Magnus felt moved by his actions. To be fair, he wasn't that fond of him but he couldn't let him go out there. At least not alone.

"Well Axel shouldn't have to do this alone. I'm coming with you, man!" He said as he walked by his side.

"Nice!"

"I guess I should follow along too, huh? Take a trip down memory lane?" Mini figured before glancing over at the siblings. "We need as many people at the fortress to keep the Storms at bay while you get the book. Go. We have no time to waste."

"I'm crashing at the Temple too," Maggie said, placing her hands on Nikki's shoulders and giving her a worried expression. "That doesn't mean I want you to go off dying or getting hurt or.. anything bad behind my back, Nik. Just.. Please stay safe. Please?"

Nikki felt her heart flutter as she stared into the griever's chocolate brown eyes. "Of course.." she nodded before smiling warmly. "You stay safe too, Mags." She then grabbed her hand, her emerald green eyes sparkling in determination. "We never really had a chance of actually hanging out without all the.. y'know. So I want to make a promise. That'll I'll take you out once this is all over, Mags. No WitherStorms, no deadly duels, no monsters. It'll be the best totally mundane thing ever and it'll be awesome."

Maggie stared at her for a moment, her heart racing as the two met eye contact. She then smiled, throwing her arms around her and pulling her into a tight hug, her head resting on her

shoulder. "...I know.." she murmured. Nikki at first was surprised, but grinned as she returned the embrace.

"Well, I'm going with Jess. I pledged to help, and that's what I must do," Gabriel stated.

"But Lukas is out there by himself," Olivia frowned, locking eye contact with Jess. "What if something happens to him?"

"There's nothing we could do for him now," Soren replied. Jess couldn't help but to admit he was right. Lukas was gone. They had to look after themselves now.

"Actually I-.." Chris finally spoke, his voice quavering as a guilty expression sat across his face. "I haven't been the best ever since Ellegaard.. y'know. I-.. I don't know what to do. Everything feels.. numb I-.." He was interrupted when Maggie approached him and embraced. He was surprised by this, but he threw her arms around her, resting his head on her shoulder as tears began to fall down his cheeks, feeling the warmth and comfort he was trying to avoid.

Despite wanting to make the moment last longer, he knew they were running out of time. However, he finally got the courage to continue moving, grateful that his friend was able to help him. "I-.. I agree with Mini that we need as many people as we need to distract the Storms, but I think I must go with Jesse," he decided. "I have to keep moving. For her.."

"Chris, you sure you got this?" Mini asked as she gave her friend a worried gaze.

"I got this. Just worry about getting the WitherStorms to Soren's fortress," Chris replied, his dark eyes filled with determination. "We'll meet up again once we retrieve the enchanted weapon."

"..alright. Stay safe."

"Yeah! Stay safe on the road out there, Chris," Maggie added.

Once everything was settled, Jesse faced the team once more. "Everyone, take good care of yourselves," he declared. "I don't want to risk you all getting hurt."

"You too," Axel replied. After the short exchange, Mini led the horses out of the cave and prepared them for the long journey. Once she was finished, Jesse mounted his horse, but before he could go, Axel went by his side. "Hey Jesse - let's try our handshake again. Just once, for the road."

Jesse couldn't help but to smile as he got off. "The Warrior's Whip? You got it," he grinned. The two did the handshake and despite it being a mess back at EnderCon, they were able to make up a quick makeshift one. Once they were done, they shared one last laugh before Jesse once again mounted his horse.

"I'll see you at Soren's, all right?" He joked.

"Not if I see you first," Axel scoffed playfully, waving goodbye as the group rode off.

◦●●◦❁ Chapter 3: A Journey for the Ages ❁◦●●◦

Soren and Ivor were leading them and so far, there have been no complaints and arguing the first couple of days they went. As they traveled, Zephyr flew ahead of them to keep a lookout, just in case. After a couple of nights, Nikki began to grow impatient, scanning the forest surrounding them to try and distract herself.

"Are we there yet?" She asked.

"Almost there," Ivor replied.

Without another word, the team continued on their journey, now finding themselves in a mesa biome. It was dry and hot with hardly any water or resources to sustain from. Jess started to grow tired, getting sick of traveling in the dry desert. It felt like days had passed since they started their trip so she figured they at least were nearby at their destination.

"Are we there yet?" She pondered.

"Not much further now.." Ivor answered. She huffed, not feeling satisfied but didn't protest as the team ventured on.

After a few more nights, the team found themselves in a snow biome. They were lucky they had mild weather and warm clothing to protect them from frostbite or hypothermia. At some point, Ivor had fallen asleep but was abruptly awakened when Soren nudged him fiercely. He was caught by so much surprise that he flinched, nearly falling off the horse. After regaining his composure, he scowled, glaring at the ginger as the sisters, who were watching, began snickering.

After passing through the snow biome, the team found themselves in a jungle. At this point, everyone was so tired, even Reuben had trouble staying awake.

"Are we there yet?" Jesse questioned wearily.

"No, no, no! We are not there yet!" Ivor huffed, beginning to get fed up with being asked the same question.

After a couple days have passed, the team found themselves hanging by a thread. Olivia had even questioned multiple times if going on this trip was really a good idea. Sure, they were going to save the world but it feels like they're just traveling nowhere. It's been about two weeks since they last talked to their friends who stayed behind and yet she couldn't help but admit to herself that she missed them dearly.



"My rear end is profoundly sore.." Gabriel groaned.

"I feel like we've been riding for ages," Chris agreed, sounding worn out as well.

"I'm telling you, we CANNOT go to the Farlands!" Soren scowled. "They're not just the edge of our world, but the limits of our comprehension!"

Ivor rolled his eyes. "Oh, please.. the Farlands are a happy accident. Nature's way of keeping life interesting," he disagreed.

"No, no, no! They are perilous and unpredictable! Perlin noise, floating points.. These are not matters to be toyed with!"

"Y'know, I think I've heard of the Farlands before," Nikki thought.

"Have you?" Jesse raised a brow.

"I'd be surprised if you hadn't," Ivor huffed.

"I'm sorry. I'm missing something. What are the Farlands?" Jess inquired.

"The Far lands lie at the very edge of all things, where logic gives way to chaos," Sorne explained. "They're a dangerous place to visit.. and a ridiculous place to construct a laboratory!"

Ivor couldn't help but to snicker at the remark. "Just wait until you see it," he said.

"Do those two never stop arguing?" Olivia scowled, beginning to get annoyed by their consent bickering.

"I don't know," Gabriel sighed. "I'm too hungry to care."

"Indeed. I'm famished," Chris agreed.

"We all are," Olivia frowned. "Maybe we should turn back?"

"This isn't the time. Swamps are too dangerous," Ivor answered. "You never know what might be lurking around."

Gabriel heard a sudden rumble sound and startled, his eyes shot open. "What was that?" He asked, frantic.

"My stomach," Soren replied nonchalantly.

"All right, let's just rest for a minute," Jesse gave in as he dismounted from his horse.

"Everyone's hungry, and we could use a breather."

"In the middle of the dark?" Chris questioned, nervously scanning their surroundings. "Are you sure that's a good idea?"

"We mustn't linger long. The Farlands are just beyond his swamp," Ivor warned.

"So this could be our last chance to find food?" Soren frowned.

Without another word, the team sat down to rest and take a small break from their trip. All except Jesse, who's eyes were wandering around their dark, desolate environments. Jess had noticed this, raising an eyebrow in confusion and wondered why her older brother wasn't sitting down with them.

"Jesse-?" She said.

"I... uhh. I'm going to explore a little," Jesse replied. "Just in case if there's anything out there to munch on."

"Well you obviously can't go alone," Nikki figured as she stood. As she did, she scratched the back of Zephyr's ears. The little EnderBat was taking a break from flying, resting on his owner's shoulder. "Besides, I need to find something for Zeph anyways." She then glanced at their sister. "Jess?"

"Let's make this quick," Jess sighed as she stood. Before the siblings could leave, she took one last glance at their friends. "Stay here okay? We'll see if we'll be able to find anything."

The rest of the team simply nodded in response, all too tired to object. As the siblings wandered through the swamp, Nikki couldn't help but to feel a little uneasy. Sure, there weren't any hostile mobs roaming through the dense swamp but she felt like they were being watched. She didn't know by what or who, but the thought sent chills down her back although she tried to distract herself from it.

Her thoughts were interrupted when Zephyr suddenly squeaked, flying off her shoulder and circling a small patch of crops. When the siblings approached it to take a better look, they identified it as potato plants.

"Sweet, some potatoes," Jesse commented. "Potatoes, you're coming with us." He kneeled down, collecting the crops and looking for any more that might be in the area.

"It's not much but it'll help," Nikki figured. "Good work, Zeph."

"Can EnderBats or.. whatever they're called eat potatoes?" Jess questioned. "Or.. anything?"

Nikki pondered on her question for a moment before shrugging. "I dunno. I don't think Zeph has that much of an appetite," she replied as her pet rested on her head, giving her a perplexed expression.

"I would've thought they'd eat.. I dunno. Ender-stuff?" Jess responded inquisitively. "Like chorus fruit? Or.. maybe Ender Pearls? What do you think Jesse-?"

Before their older brother could respond, Olivia's voice called out to them. "Hey, guys! Have you found any food yet?" She asked.

"We should probably take what we have back to the group," Jesse figured as he joined his sisters, completely ignoring the.. interesting conversation they were previously having. He was just about to leave, but froze when he noticed that Jess had her eyes on something else. "Jess, c'mon."



"Wait.." Jess murmured, creeping towards what resembled a small one-room house. Outside of the window sat a freshly baked cake, the sweet smells it's producing blowing in the air. Her siblings followed behind

her, looking equally intrigued by the small house. The three exchanged glances, Nikki and Jess wanting to investigate it while Jesse wanted to stay away from it as possible.

"A witch's hut!" A new voice erupted. The siblings were startled, noticing Ivor suddenly standing right next to them. Despite his rude entrance, they could see that his eyes were filled with fear and caution, which differed from how the brewer seemed before. Ivor glanced at them, giving all three of them a warning expression. "We should steer clear of it - nothing good ever happens when witches are involved."

"Look, a cake! That's enough to feed everyone," Nikki drooled as she stared at the cake longingly.

"It isn't worth it, Nikki - Witches HATE trespassers," the brewer warned. "Besides.. There are plenty of potatoes around."

Jess flinched in surprise, noticing something moving in the shadows. It was very vague so it was hard to tell what exactly she saw. "Is that a witch?" She fretted.

"We shouldn't be here," Ivor hissed. "Witches are very strong. And they know these swamps way better than I."

"Ivor's right. Let's get out of here," Jesse ordered.

"Ivor, Jesse. I can't pass this up!" Nikki protested.

"Nikki, this isn't the time for this!" Her older brother hissed.

"Then YOU go!" Nikki scowled. "I'm not stopping you!" She then huffed, starting to creep closer to the hut. As she did, Zephyr flew above her. "I need you to watch my back, okay?"

"I'm.. coming too. Just in case," Jess awkwardly said, not wanting to raise the tension any further. Jesse felt incredibly annoyed, trying to keep his temper at the minimum to avoid causing any more drama. After all they've been through, he's had enough drama for a while. Considering he can't leave his sisters hanging, he reluctantly followed.

"I'm telling you, this is a bad idea.." Ivor frowned, staying put. As Zephyr flew Nikki up inside the hut, he sighed, realizing there's nothing he could do to change their minds. "I'll keep watch. Just be quick about it."

"Wonder what horrible stuff's been brewed in there?" Jess commented as she gazed at the cauldron, a strange, green liquid sitting inside.

"Could be anything," Nikki joked as she dug through a chest. She beamed as she pulled out a bottle with glowing green liquid stored inside. "A potion of leaping! Cool!"

"Are you guys finished?" Jesse asked impatiently. He felt extremely tense and didn't want to spend time in here longer than he absolutely has to.

"We're coming," Nikki huffed, giving him a side glare before grinning and approaching the cake sitting on the window seal. It almost felt like it was waiting for her to take it. "An entire cake. Nice!"

"Is that it?" Jesse asked. Before he could get an answer, the siblings heard a soft, sinister cackle behind them. The three of them froze in place. It felt so devilish, it turned their blood to ice. Slowly twisting his head around, Jesse spotted a witch standing behind them. She wore a black hat, purple robes and had a twisted smile sitting on her face.

She pulled out a splash potion of harming, chucking it at the siblings, but luckily for them, their senses came back just in time and they were able to dodge the attack. Zephyr flew above her, swiftly dodging her second attack before screeching loudly. In response, the witch covered her ears, allowing for enough time to bypass her and get to safety.

Taking this opportunity, Jesse ran forward and tackled her. The two flew out the window and landed outside on the soft grass. Jesse's fall was softened as he landed on top of the witch and as quick as a cheetah, he escaped from her clutches before she could regain her composure. Jess and Nikki followed behind him, relieved to see that their older brother was okay.

"Ivor!" Jesse called, searching aimlessly for the brewer but to no avail. It was impossible to see through their dark environments. He was gone. "Ivor?"

Zephyr squeaked, ordering them to follow him. Without anywhere else to go, the siblings did as he ordered. The EnderBat flew through their dark environments, leading them back to where the others were. They expected them to be safe, but when they arrived, they noticed the witch from before and a bunch of skeletons were attacking them.

"Jesse! We need assistance!" Gabriel cried. The arrows from the skeletons startled the horses, causing them to flee.

"Hey, you! Witch!" Nikki huffed, alerting the witches and skeletons' attention. She gulped, realizing that she didn't have a plan to properly handle them all and she doubted that her siblings did as well.

Luckily, Zephyr came to their rescue. Getting their attention, he screeched loudly. The loud sound he made was enough to stun the witches and skeletons, covering their ears to protect their eardrums. As they were distracted, Jesse ran forward.

"Everyone, let's get out of here, AY-SAP!" He ordered. Without another word, the team sprinted forward. They had no ride so they had to carry on the rest of the trip on foot.

"Ivor said the Far Lands are just past this swamp!" Jess reminded them.

"Wait - where IS Ivor?" Chris questioned, realizing the brewer wasn't with them.

"What?" Soren gasped.

"I thought he was with you!" Olivia remembered.

"We don't know! He disappeared outside the witch's hut!" Nikki answered as Zephyr joined them, flying right above her. "He bailed on us."

"Curse that fool of a man," Soren grumbled.

"C'mon!" Jesse ordered, not wanting to spend any more time on useless drama.

"Hold onto your potatoes!" Gabriel commented as they continued.

◦●●◦❀ Chapter 4: The Far Lands ❀◦●●◦

After what felt like hours, the sun began to rise. The team had spent about an hour trying to shake the witches and skeletons off their tail and now finally, it seemed like their efforts paid off.

"Guys, I think we lost them for-." Nikki started to say, but froze as she came to a halt in front of a large, glitched wall. Or.. it seemed like a wall? It looked like it could stretch to infinity and she couldn't help but to feel a little tense as she gazed at it. It was definitely one of the most bizarre things she's ever seen. Even Zephyr was in awe. "Wow.."

"You lost them for wow?" Olivia inquired, glancing down at the young girl in confusion. "What does that-." She paused when Jess tapped her shoulder and pointed at the glitched wall in front of them. She was so taken aback by it, she couldn't even find the right words. "Oh. Wow.."



"Wow isn't the correct word to describe it," Chris gasped in awe. "This is astonishing, magnificent, extraordinary, absolutely scarcely credible."

"Yeah, lab boy. We get it," Nikki teased, Chris giving her a perplexed expression.

"No, no he has the right idea," Jesse replied. "This is.. I don't even know what to say."

"It's like we're at the edge of the world," Jess voiced.

"Actually, we seem to be at the corner of it," Soren corrected as he stepped forward, leading the team closer to the wall. "Welcome to the Farlands, my friends."

Jesse couldn't help but to feel intense by the dramatic entrance. As the team approached further, Nikki pulled out the cake from before and split it up into equal pieces, giving everyone a piece.

"I'm glad Nikki snagged this cake," Olivia grinned. "Makes the whole wall-of-insanity thing a lot easier to face."

"Say what you like about witches, they sure know how to make a cake," Gabriel agreed.

Soren noticed everyone was still staring at the wall in awe. He couldn't blame them. He was the same way when he first arrived here. "Quite a sight, isn't it?" He said, glancing over at Jesse. "Stretching skyward, in all its glory.. like a monument to chaos itself."

"Soren, have you been here before?" Jesse inquired.

"Not here specifically, but I HAVE visited the Farlands," the ginger answered. "The Order traveled far and wide during our heyday."

"Incredible," Gabriel gasped.

"You could say that again," Olivia commented.

"Incredible!"

Olivia huffed. "My fault, should've seen that coming."

"Ivor really went out of his way to make sure he'd never have visitors, huh?" Nikki inquired.

"He was always secretive. Both his weakness, and his strength," Soren revealed. "Whatever Ivor's hiding in here, it will be extremely well-guarded."

The team approached a long, eerie hallway. Despite glowstone sitting at the entrance, it did little work to light the dark passageway inside. Jess felt a little tense. She always hated anything that included dark and creepy.

"This route, I suspect?" Chris guessed, but he didn't seem too sure. He felt a hard pit in his stomach even though he tried to plaster on a brave face. "I'd feel better about this if the others were here.."

"I know what you mean," Olivia agreed. "I'd feel better too if Petra and Axel were here." She then tried to give him a small, encouraging smile. "But we'll get through this together. Right..?"

Chris glanced up at her, feeling more uplifted. "Right," he murmured.

"C'mon.." Jesse urged as he pressed forward, following Soren inside. The team were unsure of the outcome of this journey, but they had to keep their heads up. They were now one step closer to ending the WitherStorm once and for all..

◦●●◉❀ About the Author ❀◉●●◦

Hello, I'm Isabella, Izzy for short! Just your average teen making fanfics about her favorite shows and stuff LOL. I'm in a shit ton of fandoms and I'm interested in starting new fanfics outside of MCSM.

This includes:

MCSM ✂️ (I will stay in the fandom until I die)

Avatar, the Last Airbender/Legend of Korra 🌊🪨🔥💧

Heathers (mostly the movie) ❤️💚💛💙

The Owl House 🦉

Amphibia 🐸

MLP 🦄

Voltron 🪐

Precure ✨

The Babysitters Club (graphic novels only) 🧑

Winx Club 🧚♀️

Sofia the First (kinda) 👑

Ever After High 🧚

Monster High 🧛

Royale High 👑

Rainbow Magic 🧚♂️

The Ghost and Molly McGee 🧛

I also ship a shit ton of stuff like McSawyer, Jesstra, Jetra, Lukesse, Sashannarcy, Lumity, Raeda, Huntlow, Klance, Rarijack, Flutterdash, Twipie + Sunset. A lot more that I'm too lazy to list lol. I also include OC's.. if that's fine with any of y'all, I love adding OC's 😭😭 I hope y'all enjoy my stories and have a wonderful day:D

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